

June 9, 2009 - Murtha: House Appropriations Committee Funds Local Public Safety and Small Business Projects

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Congressman John P. Murtha, Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, announced today that the House Appropriations Committee has passed a \$64.4 billion fiscal year 2010 Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations Bill that includes funding to improve public safety communication systems in Fayette and Indiana Counties, to assist local small businesses with international opportunities, and to provide full funding for the National Drug Intelligence Center.

The appropriations bill includes \$1,000,000 for Fayette County to replace its outdated emergency responder communications equipment with a state-of-the-art mobile data infrastructure system. System enhancements include allowing a call to be routed to a first responder via direct data transfer from the dispatcher's computer aided dispatch (CAD) software. This provides greater accuracy of emergency response information between the more than 90 police, fire, and ambulance companies throughout the County and also improves response time. In conjunction with this upgrade, the County plans to improve its Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The appropriations bill also includes \$650,000 to upgrade the public safety radio communications network in Indiana County. The current network is insufficient to meet the County's fire, police, EMS, dispatch and paging needs. This upgrade to a digital public safety radio network will significantly improve communications between emergency services personnel during routine calls and emergency disasters/events.

"The emergency communications systems in many of our counties are antiquated due to fast changing technology and the lack of funds to make necessary upgrades," commented Murtha. "In the past few years, we have invested a lot of money into buying equipment for individual police departments, but having a modern county-wide system to coordinate services and response is absolutely essential. The County Commissioners have made these projects their priority, and I'm pleased the Appropriations Committee has included this funding in next years spending bill."

Also included in the appropriations bill is \$350,000 for the Center for Global Competitiveness at Saint Francis University and Saint Vincent College. Since 1993, the Center has assisted small businesses throughout the region in exploring new and expanded international and domestic marketing opportunities. Services made available through the Center include individualized marketing consulting, international trade assistance, international trade event promotion, videoconferencing facilities, global assistance grants, training seminars and newsletters.

The appropriations bill also includes \$44,023,000 for the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) in Johnstown, as requested by President Obama. The NDIC is the nation's principal center for strategic domestic counterdrug intelligence, providing analytical products to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), DOD, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Department of Treasury, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Food and Drug Administration, and state and local entities. The NDIC also provides real-time support to law enforcement and intelligence communities by conducting document and computer exploitation for materials associated with counterdrug and/or counterterrorism investigations. The NDIC was recently presented with the U.S. Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Management and continues to receive strong praise from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.

The FY10 Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations Bill also makes key national investments into:

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COPS: The bill provides \$298 million for the COPS hiring program. Combined with the \$1 billion provided for in the Recovery Act, this will put 7,000 new officers on the streets of American communities.

• Border Security: \$1.5 billion, a 30% increase over last years funding, to address firearms and narcotics trafficking between the U.S. and Mexico. These funds will also address years of imbalance between the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security by providing resources needed to detain, adjudicate, and prosecute

criminal aliens referred by Homeland Security.

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STEM: The

bill provides over \$1 billion for science, technology, engineering and math

(STEM) education. Particular emphasis is

placed on identifying and recommending the best models of K-12 STEM education domestically and internationally,

inspiring an interest in science in students in elementary school and

encouraging hands-on, inquiry-based education.

The

FY10 Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Bill totals \$64.4 billion,

an increase of \$6.7 billion over last year and \$200 million below the

President's budget request. The bill is

expected to be considered by the full House later this month, where it will

then head to the Senate for its consideration.

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